

Central Valley Ag Tour 2006

Hosted by Congressman Devin Nunes

May 31, 2006

Welcome to the Nunes ag tour

Thank you for being a part of my third annual Central Valley Ag Tour of the 21st Congressional District. You will quickly find that this day will be time well spent in becoming better acquainted with the variety and complexity of the agricultural industry here in Fresno and Tulare counties.

There will be plenty to see, hear, smell and taste along the way. While the pace of this tour must be brisk to accommodate the number of stops, I assure you that there will be time for questions, as well as opportunities to deepen your understanding of the many facets you encounter.

I know we'll have fun along the way, and I appreciate the opportunity to get to know all of you better.



Devin Nunes

Ag diversity is Central Valley strength

Since 1948, California has been the nation's top agriculture state in cash receipts. And nowhere is agriculture more significant than the central San Joaquin Valley, where Fresno and Tulare counties top the list in ag production.

In the valley economy, agriculture accounts for more than 21 percent of all income and 25 percent of all employment, according to UC Davis studies.

Even as some commodities struggle from year to year, the region's diverse crops and livestock help maintain its economic strength.

Last year, ag production in Fresno County surpassed \$4 billion for the third consecutive year, with grapes topping



Rep. Devin Nunes, far left, speaks to farmers at the Fresno Fairgrounds about the upcoming Farm Bill. On stage is Agriculture Secretary Mike Johanns, Rep. George Radanovich and KMJ ag reporter Roy Isom.

the list in crop dollar value at \$554 million.

Tulare County's ag production surpassed the \$4

billion for the second consecutive year with milk topping the list in crop dollar value at \$1 billion.

Nunes welcomes USDA's Ben Higgins

Congressman Nunes is pleased to welcome Ben Higgins, State Director of USDA Rural Development in California, as this year's Ag Tour Special Guest.

Higgins was appointed as the state director by USDA Secretary Mike Johanns on March 2, 2006. Higgins oversees 140 employees and the operation of the state office in Davis, CA, and 25 local offices, from Eureka to El Centro.

Higgins, formerly served as Executive Vice President of the California Cattlemen's Association (CCA), based in Sacramento, where he was responsible for overseeing all the activities of the asso-



Ben Higgins

ciation. Before assuming his position as Executive Vice President at CCA in December, 2002, he served as Director of Public Affairs for the association. His duties included producer communications and working with federal agencies and legisla-

tors on issues of concern and interest to the beef cattle industry.

Higgins was born and raised in San Luis Obispo, CA, where his family currently operates a fourth-generation commercial cow-calf operation in and around the coastal community of Cayucos.

He graduated from Cal Poly, San Luis Obispo in December 2000 with a bachelor's degree in Agricultural Business, concentrating in policy. He completed an internship in Tokyo, Japan before joining CCA.

Ben and his wife, Rochelle, reside in Sacramento.



Campos Brothers Almonds

Fermin and Tony Campos moved from Spain to Caruthers, California in 1955 and started their almond operation in 1981.

We believe - and our customers agree - the best-processed almond always starts with the finest natural almond. So, we pride ourselves on our quality control at each stage of the operation

and the customer satisfaction it creates. Our best-practices quality control program begins in our winter fields and continues through the entire harvest management process, manufacturing functions, and distribution period.

Campos Brothers Farms embraces the Almond Board of California's Food Quality and Safety Program (FQSP) as

the starting point for our own multi-step program that assures the Campos Brothers almonds are produced in the safest, most responsible manner that modern science enables. We let our customers meet or exceed their highest product and process specifications while demonstrating the highest respect for natural resources and the people who produce our almonds.

We use the Almond Board's Good Agricultural Practices (GAPs), Good Manufacturing Practices (GMPs) and Sanitation Standard Operating Procedures (SSOPs) as the minimum standard for our own Campos Brothers Farms Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point (HAACP) program.

Our Campos Hyperspecs

Visit them at:

www.camposbrothers.com



program allows customers to create the most sophisticated almond specification for their needs. Powered by the extraordinary commitment of our manufacturing team to create and maintain industry-leading performance standards.



A-G Sod Farms

A-G Sod Farms, Inc. put down its roots over thirty years ago when three partners established Greenlawn Sod Farm in Fort Collins, Colorado. Later, two Greenlawn partners founded A-G Sod Farms, adding a network of farms to serve all of California, Southern Nevada and Colorado. Since its inception, A-G Sod Farms has grown from our original four

acres to multiple farms with thousands of acres. Our formula for success has remained the same: produce a quality product, keep close to the customer, and make deliveries on time.

Is a Sod Lawn Less Work?

Yes, a professional sod lawn needs no special care because it is a healthy mature lawn when installed, whereas

a sprigged or seeded lawn requires months of nurturing to reach maturity. Sod is grown under expert supervision from either top quality seed blends or certified hybrid sprigs.

After it has been installed, just water, mow and fertilize your sod lawn as needed and it will remain a healthy, green carpet of grass, requiring very little maintenance.

Where can I use sod?

Sod can be installed practically anywhere, even where seeding is impossible or too costly. Sod is often used to stop soil erosion and water pollution on slopes where rain would wash away both seed and soil.

Sod is available in a variety of grass blends to suit various needs such as climate, amount of usage, sun and shade conditions.

Can sod withstand heavy usage?

Certainly! Sod establishes itself quickly. In a couple of weeks, it is ready for full use. It creates the perfect surface for lawn games and family outdoor living. With today's various blends of hardy

grasses, sod is chosen for parks, golf courses, athletic fields, as well as residential homes and business parks.

When can I install a sod lawn?

Sod has revolutionized the lawn business! Now you can install a sod lawn anytime during the year when the ground can be tilled. There is no need to wait for the "right" season to put in your lawn.

Is sod a good investment?

Yes -- it's the only way to go -- from bare soil to lush, green lawn in just hours. Yet, it's relatively inexpensive to use. In the few hours it takes to install your sod lawn, your property value increases significantly and even more in aesthetic value.

Visit them at:
www.agsod.com





Kearney Agricultural Center

Located 15 miles south-east of Fresno in the central San Joaquin Valley, one of the most productive agricultural areas in the world, Kearney is the University of California's largest off-campus agricultural research facility.

Kearney's mission is to provide state-of-the-science research and educational programs to promote sustainability of California's 24.5 billion dollar agriculture industry, and to enhance the quality of the rural environment. To that end, a multi-disciplinary team of 25 faculty members drawn from UC Davis, UC Riverside, and UC Berkeley are permanently assigned to Kearney for the benefit of the people of the San Joaquin

Valley, and of California in general. When combined with technical and support staff, students and post-docs, and visiting scientists from around the world, Kearney routinely houses more than 125 employees.

For more than 35 years, Kearney has achieved international acclaim for leadership in areas such as development of new fruit, nut, and grape varieties, innovative cultural and irrigation practices, and pest and disease management techniques. In addition, Kearney specializes in postharvest biology, working with growers, packers, and shippers of fresh market crops to reduce losses and provide consumers of California produce, near



Mealybugs

and far, with top quality products.

Kearney also carries a leadership role in maintaining the high quality of California's rural environment, with pro-

grams in important fields including air and water quality, and mosquito management.

Visit them at:
www.uckac.edu

Ruiz Foods

What happens when father and son team up to live out their dream of selling authentic Mexican Food?

A multimillion-dollar company, nearly 2,500 employees, and a place in the Small Business Administration's Hall of Fame.

In 1964, Louis Ruiz and his son, Fred, began living out their dream of selling frozen authentic Mexican food. From their beginning in a small warehouse to the present day facility that is nearly 300,000 square feet, father and son have met the challenge of

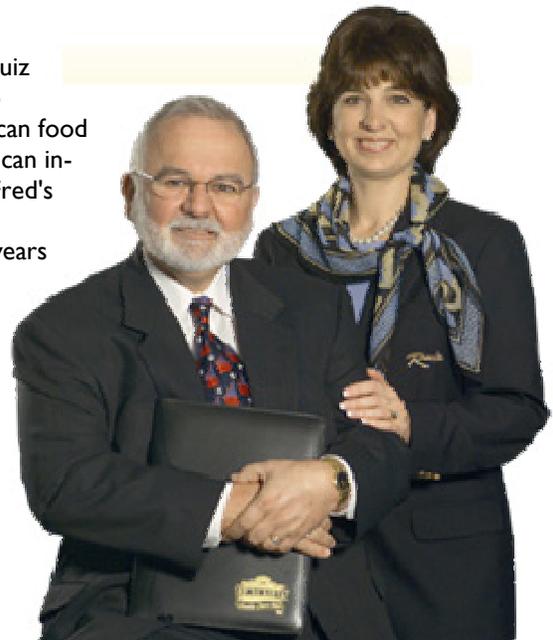
growing demand with genuine hard work and determination to become the largest manufacturer of frozen Mexican food in the United States.

Situated upon 43 acres in the heart of the San Joaquin Valley in Dinuba, California is Ruiz Foods' headquarters and main facility. A second facility in Tulare, California and a third in Denison, Texas helps Ruiz Foods keep up with great demand for the company's products. With the ability to manufacture more than 200 different products under their signature El Mon-

terey brand, the Ruiz focus continues to be authentic Mexican food based on the Mexican inspired recipes of Fred's mother.

More than 40 years later, Fred's children, Kim and Bryce, carry on the traditions that have made Ruiz Foods the leading Mexican food manufacturer in the United States.

As the third generation of the Ruiz family, they are creating new products and expanding distribution to share their love of Mexican food in more ways, and with more people, than ever before. That's the continuing legacy of Ruiz Foods



**Chairman Fred Ruiz and
Vice President Kimberly Ruiz Beck**



Visit them at:
www.elmonterey.com



Family Tree Farms

David Jackson and his family shared a vision for growing truly exceptional fruit, believing that this sweeter, riper fruit would create genuine demand and ensure the kind of long-term customer loyalty that would secure the family's farming operation for generations to come.

Today, the Jacksons are living that dream in Family Tree Farms.

Now in its third generation farming in the San Joaquin Valley, the Jackson family grows over 3,500 acres of premium stone fruit with an all-out focus on flavor. Having earned a reputation as California's premier grower of white flesh peaches, white flesh nectarines and pluots, Family

Tree Farms is well ahead of the variety curve, enabling the company to guarantee uninterrupted supplies of consistently great-tasting fruit.

This relentless commitment to quality begins in the field and continues through the company owned packing, cooling and shipping facilities. The Jackson family now enjoys bringing the fruits of their labor directly to their customers, fostering lasting partnership with supporters who share the Family

Tree vision.

Growing Strong

With over 3,500 acres of premium California stone fruit currently in production, Family Tree Farms is one of the state's largest growers. But



don't let our size and strength fool you. We're still a family farming operation at heart - a business built on integrity, honesty and long-lasting customer relationships. We still harvest our fruit based on quality and flavor, not market pressures. And we still think the best

way to please our customers is through superior products and sensible business practices.

Visit them at:
www.familytreefarms.com

Bravo Farms - Artisan cheeses since 1995



Visit them at:
www.bravofarms.com